

グローバル社会における公民教育 ー日本のケースー

Civic Education in a Global Society: Japan's Case

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ABSTRACT

グローバル化により, 世界規模の政治, 社会, 経済問題を始め, 且つてない競争, 多様性が増し, 多文化コミュニティーでの協力, 共存が必要となり, アイデンティティにも影響してきた。しかし, グローバルと地域, 政府と地方自治体の連携の欠如は未解決のままである。当論文では, 1) グローバル化がいかに日本人のアイデンティティに影響を及ぼしたかを検証し, 次いで, 2) 市民権及びコミュニティーに関する現代日本におけるアイデンティティの問題を提起する。最後に, 3) 将来のグローバル及び地域社会を形成するために必要な公民教育の概念的な骨組みを明確化する。西洋哲学の伝統を外在目的としたシステムとは逆に, 社会の人間関係の絆を内在基盤とした儒教基盤国家における公民教育の新方策を提示することにおいて, 当論文は有意義であろう。

Globalization is causing ever-increasing competition and diversity in addition to worldwide political and socio-economic issues. Consequently, it has created a need for collaboration and coexistence in pluralistic communities. This, in turn, has affected the concept of identity beyond nationality. However, the issues concerning a lack of a link between the global and local and even the national and local remain unresolved. A good example of this is the Japanese government's delayed response in the local areas affected by the 3.11 natural disasters, particularly in regard to relief funds from overseas. The focus of the paper is to 1) examine how globalization has affected identity during Japan's historical transformation with an emphasis on Japanese cultural values, 2) address issues of identity in contemporary Japan in terms of citizenship and community,

and 3) articulate a conceptual framework for civic education that will address the critical issues shaping the future of our global and local communities. Globalization has negatively affected local communities, where people increasingly find local traditions under siege. Thus, we need to stress the meaning of culture while also examining the link between the global and local. This study is significant because it will provide an alternative approach to civic education in Confucian-based countries like Japan, where the educational system is based on relations, social ties, and internal goals—as opposed to the external goals of the Western philosophical tradition. Furthermore, it will provide clues on how government policies on civic education should be shaped.

1. Introduction

Globalization is causing ever-increasing competition and diversity as well as the world-wide political and socio-economic issues. Consequently, it has created a need for collaboration and coexistence in pluralistic communities. Furthermore, it has affected the concept of identity due to frequent, complex human interactions beyond the national boundaries by means of instant information technology. The definition of identity is becoming a key issue in coping with diversity and solving global problems.

However, the issues of lack of link between the global and local and even between the national and local still remain unresolved. A good example is the Japanese government's delayed response in the local areas affected by the 3.11 natural disasters, especially in regard to relief funding from overseas.

Thus, it is critical to empower the relations between the national government and the local communities in order to integrate global and local. Mr. Noda, former Prime Minister, stressed that there is no rebirth of Japan without the rebirth of Fukushima. The new educational agenda must prepare students for responsible citizenship and leadership so that they can take the initiative in both global and local communities.

The first step is to redefine identity, citizenship, and community, not based on nationalism, but rather on global concepts. Furthermore, we, as educators,

must develop civic education that creates respectful global citizens at the local level. Yet, understanding that globalization has created negative effects on local communities where people find local traditions under siege. Thus, we need to stress the meaning of culture while examining the link between the global and local.

2. The Purpose of the Paper

The focus of this paper is to: 1) examine how globalization has affected identity in Japan's historical transformation, stressing Japanese cultural values; 2) address issues of identity in contemporary Japan in relation to citizenship and community, and how it compares to Western individualism; and 3) articulate a conceptual framework of civic education to address critical issues shaping the future of our global and local communities.

3. Globalization vs. Japanese Identity, Nationalism, and Its Cultural Values

A number of researchers articulated Japanese identity, stressing their uniqueness and homogeneity (Befu, 1992; Miyanaga, 2011). Japanese identity is deeply rooted in the Japanese cultural tradition and knowledge of social norms based on Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shintoism. Traditionally, Japanese have tended to have a collective identity in which they can share their cultural consciousness of the commonality of their cultural values. The essence of

the Japanese collective identity is *ie* as a social unit, or the family system. It emphasizes the importance of kinship relations and the continuity of family lines from generation to generation, as represented by the unbroken imperial line.

The sources of the Japanese cultural heritage can be explained by geographical, historical, and mythological factors (Hendry, 1996). Geographically, Japan is an isolated island; this certainly set the stage for Japanese uniqueness and homogeneity. However, since ancient times the continental influence of Chinese civilization via Korea has been evident. Thus, Japan became an agrarian society based on solid social order and political hierarchy. Japan was continuously influenced by China over the centuries, even during the Tokugawa era when Japan closed its borders to outsiders.

In Japanese mythology, the origin of Japan is believed to come from the “Sun Goddess” who is the direct ancestor of the imperial line. The internal organization of *uji* relates to family lines that descended from the sun goddess. This internal structure was significant to determine social and political hierarchy based on degree of the closeness of their relationship to the imperial line. “These principles of social and political organization provided Japan not only with a symbolic centrality and focus of identity, but also with a blueprint for social order which has persisted through the centuries” (Hendley, 1996, p.11).

In the feudal age, Japanese identity was mainly based on the Confucian principles which stress five human relationships, especially between the feudal lord and subjects requiring loyalty and filial piety. The principle of *Bushido* also became prominent as the essence of Japanese identity. The Japanese *bakufu* in the Edo era controlled people and society with the Confucian principles and encouraged *Bushido*. Furthermore, the influence of Confucianism can be seen in the Imperial

Rescript on Education of 1890 which required the maintenance of traditional morality in the form of hierarchy, loyalty, obedience, and diligence.

It should be noted that the Japanese collective identity based on traditional moral values was crystalized as emerging nationalism during Japan’s national isolation before opening its ports and in the Meiji era. This Japanese cultural consciousness of the commonality of their cultural values, including their loyalty to the state developed into the Japanese nationalism in which the Japanese accepted absolute authoritarian thoughts as Japanese imperialism and militarism. In fact, Shinto became the state religion in which the Emperor was seen as the authority over all sectors during Japan’s road to wars from 1931 through 1945. During that time, education and its morality was utilized as a tool to reinforce the Japanese central authority and military forces on behalf of the Emperor. Consequently, the ordinary Japanese people were forced to sacrifice themselves to giving loyalty to the State overlapped with the Emperor or God. The revitalized spirit of *Bushido* is a good example for the Japanese ultranationalism during the Pacific War when Shinto orchestrated with the principles of Buddhism and Confucianism.

In spite of Japanese nationalism, Japan has also been repeatedly influenced by many elements of foreign cultures and accepted various cultural traits as new Japanese values. This cultural transformation helped modify and polish the Japanese culture and resulted in creating a new, sophisticated cultural model. Particularly Japan has been globalized by European countries since the 16th century and adopted many important elements of Western culture and technology. This has definitely shaped the traditional Japanese identity and society into the modern Japanese identity and democratic society. These Western influences are recognized in industrialization and modernization together with the enlightenment of Western Civilization in the Meiji era and a turn to liberal democracy after WWII.

Japan turned around from a military state into a democratic country after Japan's defeat in the Pacific War. In the name of democracy, a new Japanese constitution guarantees three main principles: people's sovereignty, fundamental human rights, and renunciation of war. The traditional moral codes based on the Shinto and Confucian principles were replaced by democracy. As a result, the concepts of Japanese collective identity also had to be changed. In addition, the Japanese education system also turned into more democratic ally, stressing Western cultural values without losing the centralized government control. Yet, today the majority of Japanese still tend to follow traditional morality as their code of ethics and preserve their collective identity in contemporary Japan. In this sense, the maintenance of social order seems to be maintained, at least, in the surface in contemporary Japan.

However, this type of social control contains both positive and negative effects. For example, today Japan's internal political instability and its political leaders' reactions and responses to the recent territorial disputes with China, Korea, and Russia certainly address issues on emerging Japanese nationalism. In fact, official trips by political leaders to the worship at the Yasukuni Shrine and government responses to the comfort women in Asian countries during the WWII become serious remaining war issues addressed by the neighboring Asian countries. These current world political issues on Japan reflect on the emerging Japanese nationalism at the end of Edo era when both internal political and economic turmoil and external threats by the powerful Western forces caused the collapse of the weakened Japanese *bakufu*, which was replaced by the strong Meiji government. Furthermore, in the midst of this several political, economic, and socio-cultural crises have occurred in Japan since post war era up to today. Thus, the Japanese are questioning if their collective identity is still working well in a rapidly changing diverse

world and they are pondering what is meant to be Japanese.

The only positive effect of Japanese collective identity under the maintenance of social order in new Japan can be perceived in Japan's huge economic success during 1960s through mid-1970's when the strong central government set forth its political and economic measures and actions. The Japanese centralized education system and core cultural values such as cooperation, harmony, and diligence worked well to insure that success. Today the Japanese have a feeling of great national pride regarding these collective efforts and outcomes.

The Japanese have always followed the traditional moral values as their anchor which has become the core of their collective identity. But is this kind of Japanese mentality sufficient in a global society which requires critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills? Befu (1992) criticizes the weakness of Japanese mythology, stating three points: emphasis on mere hierarchical human relations that stressed obedience, tendency of placing the interest of the nation-state above the interest of the individual, and lack of knowledge of freedom and respect for the individual as opposed to Western values. Her criticism of the Japanese is valid, because Japanese nationalism and society as a whole overlook the stance of the individuals, by stressing group conformity under the central authority. In this extent, the fundamental human rights, one of the three principles for democracy stated in the Japanese new constitution, cannot be always guaranteed. Thus, there is a cultural gap between Japanese groupism and Western individualism based on democracy.

4. Collective Identity vs. Citizenship and Community in Contemporary Japan

The next step is to examine how the Japanese attempt to fill the gap between the individual possessing collective identity and the global society

requiring the integrity of Western values. It is important to address issues of Japanese collective identity from a socio-political perspective in relation to citizenship and community. This is because Western cultural values have developed based on democracy, stressing equality and freedom under the constitution of each country and putting its principles into practice in local communities.

A number of publications articulated the issue on the relations between globalization and citizenship (Marshall, 1992; Nakamura, 2012). Globalization is determined as Westernization that stresses abstractness or objectivity, as opposed to Japanese subjectivity represented by sentiments and obligation. Osler & Starkey (2009) identify three dimensions of global citizenship: Aspiration as equality and freedom, consciousness of ascribing to the community, and individual's free participation and action in the local community. He claims that individual dignity and fundamental human rights can be recognized as the basis of universal humanity. This then determines that global citizens are based on common human values. As a new identity has been continuously evolving based on socio-cultural changes, it is significant to focus on human rights and accountability. Yet, Osler & Starkey warn that current democracy is limited to nationalism because of lack of social or moral responsibility, involvement in community, and political literacy.

In the case of Japan, Nakamura (2012) states that "in a Japanese society, the term, "citizenship" is substituted for "nationality" (p.138). In fact, Japanese traditional values, collective identity, and the concept of citizenship as nationality are blocked in a global society. Miyanaga (2011) summarizes the concepts of democracy stated by Mead in the following way, "The concept of democracy, highly abstract and universal, should be expressed in concrete social organization consisting of individuals who achieve self-realization through one another." (p.163). Miyanaga identifies the relationship

between "the global and the local through a *two-way cycle*, that is, "a cycle between global discourse in abstraction and self-realization localized through concrete daily actions" (p.163), affirming that "this two-way cycle contains a momentum for a progress of the human kind and democracy..." (p.164). In this extent, the phrase, "Think globally and act locally" makes sense.

However, Miyanaga criticizes this, indicating that this cycle is dysfunctional in Japanese society and that the Japanese collective identity is blocked in a global community; the so called, *an iconic bloc*. Then she finds that the Japanese style solution to an iconic bloc is '*an iconic action*' through which the conflicts between Japanese spontaneous, personal human spirit and their traditional group culture are geared towards artistic sentiments and related actions organized by the rich imageries. To the Japanese, iconic actions are not explained with analytical reasoning of concrete actions, but rather explained with the global or cosmic harmonized with the self.

Adachi (2011) further investigates the relationship between identity and culture in the multiculturalism from the perspective of "reflexivity", with which identity and tradition are determined by the individual as a catalyst in a fluid social environment. First, Adachi points out "three interconnected issues of multiculturalism in relation to the ideas of culture and identity: the essentialistic understanding of culture, the intrinsic connection and distance between individual identity and group culture, and the crisis of individual autonomy caused by protecting cultural conventions" (p.289). Adachi determines that "the evolved identity is as 'an agent' such that the individual agrees to be molded in pluralistic communities and that he or she strives to create flexible identity in order to adapt to the complex environment by adjusting and utilizing various available resources" (p.281).

However, there is an obstacle in pursuing a new identity as an agent in contemporary Japan.

Historically the central government has always played a critical role in modernizing Japan. Today the national government is becoming weaker in its political power and relations with the local communities. Yet, The dual concepts of Kan (government or official) vs. Min (people or unofficial) and “Kou” (public) vs. “Shi” (private) still remain as common sense among the Japanese people. The former terms are often used as explicit, and the latter, as more internal social convention. The Japanese cannot always actualize themselves as individuals under group pressure and conformity due to the notion of the strong hierarchical power relationship between the group and the individual.

Under this circumstance individuals often have to sacrifice themselves. Thus, something must be done to empower the self and local community and the relationship between the local and national government through a bottom-up approach.

One way to empower the relations between Japanese identity and political authority can be found in the debate between the communitarian and the liberal. Oya (2012) discusses the concepts of the communitarians and the liberals. The commonality is that both groups tend to prefer to interfere with others in politics based on their democratic minds. But the communitarians want to be interfered with by others in politics, while the liberals do not want to be interfered. Furthermore, the communitarians tend to pursue the common good as the ultimate goal identified by a group, as opposed to the liberals pursuing self-actualization. The communitarian model can fit into the Japanese culture, and the liberal model, for Westerners. Fox (1997) criticizes the concept that “the nations of Confucian Asia are modernizing, but in the direction of “illiberal democracy”, which they see as an approach to democratic practice that takes communitarian concerns like social solidarity and political virtue into greater account than other, more liberal democratic societies do” (abstract). However, Fox

supports the Communitarian thoughts, in such a way that “the view of Confucianism as necessarily authoritarian and suggests that Confucian theory and practice provides a strong and in many ways unique communitarian response to liberalism, without fundamentally invalidating those humanistic principles basic to democratic reform” (abstract). Thus, in spite of the two separate thoughts, the bottom line should be the common human values.

Befu identifies Japanese identity in relation to the nature of the reference group of world economic power and in its positive and negative images in the historical transformation. Befu first points out that “In post-Meiji Restoration Japan the referent was Europe and the United States, being ideologically independent from China” (p.29). Befu further states that “the positive view the Japanese have of themselves will depend on Japan’s geoeconomic strength relative to world economic powers, notably the United States” (p.29). These two points are well taken for the analysis of Japanese identity within historical and global contexts.

5. Conceptual Framework of Civic Education in contemporary Japan

Today Japan is a democratic nation, taking a leadership role of world economy and environment sustainability. In addition, Japan has unique culture and highly values education. Thus, education must be the top priority in contemporary Japan, especially civic education is critical in coping with a complex, unpredictable future.

Yamada (2010) states that “Global citizenship contains two elements: to be civic and to be civil. Civic is defined as “to be concerned about public matters such as world hunger and global environment, civil, as to be not rejected the dialogues or controversies with others from other countries” (p.279). Thus, Yamada defines global citizenship as both ‘claims of social order’ and ‘societal actions’.

The rationale of civic education is a lack of morality and loss of individual autonomy in the current society.

A number of publications stress civic education along with moral education aiming at the development of mutual respect and tolerance, and concern for the rights and welfare of individuals and the community (Parker, 1996; Colby et.al, 2003). It is important to keep in mind that Western approach to moral education focuses on moral reasoning, as opposed to Japanese moral empathy. But civic and moral education makes sense, because Confucian communitarian thoughts can be philosophical foundations of civic education in Japan due to their moral constructs. Colby et.al. provide philosophical foundations to civic education, addressing fundamental moral questions; “What are the essential elements of civic character for Americans? How can civic education contribute to developing these qualities in sustained and effective ways?” (p.21). These questions based on common human values would articulate the visions of responsible democratic citizenship, which should be a starting point for the formation of civic education in Japan.

Castillo-Montoya & Torres-Guzman (2012) discuss how we interact with ideas, people, and existing culture of institutions and interpret our ways of understanding and engaging in the world. Furthermore, they state that “the personal experience includes collective experience and community memory, which account for the experiences they have with their families and the historical legacy they develop within their community” (p.542). In Japan, rich imageries of experience with personal sentiments and obligation such as war memories and 3.11 natural disasters would be meaningful civic and moral learning material. Japanese cultural sensitivities and consciousness of common cultural values would help conceptualize self-identity and one’s commitment to communities.

However, Miyanaga comments that “It (tradition)

must be articulated to global discourse more actively and the higher levels of abstraction” (p.170) in spite of her affirmation of Japanese cultural tradition. Castillo-Montoya & Torre-Guzman (2012) support her idea, stating that “The commitment to communities requires a reinvention of self ... It requires a balance between affirmation of the self and evolution of identity: it goes hand in hand with commitment to the self as an extension of a larger community (p.549). Thus, conceptualizing self-identity and commitment to communities means personal integration by developing knowledge, social conscience, and skills.

In the premise of the moral constructs and commitment to communities, themes and strategies then should be developed. Colby et.al identify three themes in civic education: Civic understanding, motivation, and skills. Civic understanding includes analytical knowledge of political, economic, social, environmental sustainability, human rights, gender, diversity, and health problems in both world and local communities. Motivation means positive attitudes toward those issues, problems and persistence in finding alternative solutions. Skills include global awareness, critical thinking, problem solving, communication skills, creativity, organizational skills, interpersonal skills, needed to take societal action for the common goods.

In Japanese, *kokumin* (people of the country) is differentiated from *koumin* (people of the public). The development of *koumin* should be stressed in civic education, because conceptualizing self-identity and commitment to communities comes first in this term, as opposed to *kokumin* who rely on the country’s authority. In the premise of full understanding of *koumin*, skills should be developed in an efficient fashion.

6. Summary

The new educational agenda in a global society

must prepare students for responsible democratic citizenship, based on individuals striving to promote the common good as well as attaining their own personal goals. There is an urgent need to develop student competence in civic education to make our local and global communities a better place.

Key issues addressed in civic education, particularly in Japan, are the meaning of Japanese culture and its moral constructs basic to the communitarian thoughts and a need of integrity of self-identity and commitment to communities. Tools for coping with local and global issues can be civic literacy, socio-political consciousness, communication and interpersonal skills, critical thinking, problem-solving, and organizational skills.

Furthermore, there is a need to create a new social system in the local areas where the national government and local community leaders have an effective communication network that enables efficient decision-makings and encourages efficient actions. There is a need for social democracy as moral endeavor which requires equality, freedom, and commitment to local communities. The role of educators is to enhance students' competence in civic education and enhance future community leaders who take the initiative in coping with local and global problems regarding social justice and world peace. This bottom-up approach would empower the relationships between the global and local as well as the national and local. It would result in integrating self-identity and local and global communities.

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